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But in the end these possessions stirred the envy not merely of ambitious and worldly men but also of the land-hungry poor. To be sure the Abbot of a flourishing monastery might correctly point out that the revenues did not enrich the monks, who normally lived under his guidance by an austere religious rule. These religious in their bare cells did not taste the fine vintages pressed from monastery grapes carefully tended by brothers who rose at four for Matins and then expended themselves zealously for the cause of God. Nevertheless the critics were not by any means only emancipated spirits who found moral discipline irksome and the Church old-fashioned. They were also earnest, weather-beaten peasants, with no soil to till, and often desperately poor, who understandably looked upon Church estates with a covetous eye. And of course everywhere the well applauded and sharp-tongued ideologies of the time—Marxism, Nationalism, Nihilism—were allied against the Church, often looked upon by the seemingly more enlightened folk of those days as the heritor of a creed outworn. And it must be admitted that sometimes a segment of the clergy, grown comfortable and worldly, acted as if they thought so, too.

Protestantism inside the old Empire clung to the enclaves which had been established during the era of the Reformation and the Counter-Reformation. Despite the strife incident to the Thirty Years' War both Lutheranism and Calvinism maintained themselves resolutely in Hungary, for example, so that prior to the outbreak of World War II Catholics in that country constituted about 67 per cent of the population, while Protestants numbered nearly 27 per cent and adhered to both the Lutheran and the Calvinist tradition. In Czechoslovakia the situation was relatively the same, though the number of Protestant groups was greater. A considerable part of the population —6 per cent in 1932—professed no religion of any kind. Another characteristic of the old Empire was the presence of the

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●795 Greek Orthodox Church, which though united in its Uniate form with Rome, preserved its old language and customs. This Church became the target of special Russian propagandistic and repressive efforts as soon as the Iron Curtain was established.

565 795 369 Elsewhere outside the former realm of the Habsburgs the situation was comparable. In Poland a Catholic peasantry whose loyalty was deeply moving lived confidently though primitively in the light of a mystical faith, while worldliness and skepticism were prevalent among the upper classes. It was commonly said there, after World War I, that the most religious of peoples was governed by the most morally lax of bureaucrats; and that may well have been the case. Nor could the coming of industrialism to such mushroom cities as Lodz, so bitterly lamented by Ladislas Reymont, bring about the immediate solution of any grave social problem. Nevertheless, as we shall see, there existed in Poland religious elites of extraordinary quality and dedication. In eastern Germany, overwhelmingly Protestant despite certain vigorous centers of Catholic activity such as the Ermland in East Prussia and the border districts west of Poznan (Silesia was a province apart, its culture having been developed under the Habsburgs), one could go from the old conservative, rural Church communities of the landed estates along the Baltic Sea to the liberal atmosphere of Saxony, where the social problems inherent in modern industrial society dominated thought and action. Concerning the Balkans one need say here only that, though they suffered from the normal diseases of feudalism, they offered much of vital and absorbing interest to the student of religious life.

175 186 These observations will help to explain the situation which followed the First World War. The old Austro-Hungarian Empire was dissolved, and dissident nationalist sentiment, supported by the will of the victorious Allies, demanded the crea-

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tion of separate states. Therewith a tide of Liberalism merged with the currents of upsurging tribal nationalism to create the pattern of conflict which was later to prove so advantageous to the totalitarians. Czech nationalism, having in Thomas Masaryk a brilliantly effective standard-bearer, seemed at first blush to usher in a new era of democratic and progressive social thought. It soon became obvious, however, that the autonomism of the Czechs—which led at the outset even to the establishment of a National Church—would of necessity engender comparable feelings in the breasts of the other peoples in the Czechoslovak Republic. The Slovaks rallied round their own traditions of language and culture, and swiftly but surely became committed to a quest for autonomy which found a temporary though unsatisfactory haven under Hitler. Among Sudeten Germans feeling was almost as strong and led ultimately to the fateful formation of a political party which advocated union with Germany. Nor was the situation different elsewhere. Yugoslavia was plagued from the beginning by deep and bitter conflict among the Serbs, the Croats, and the Slovenes.

In Hungary a violent Communist revolution, spearheaded in late 1918 by Béla Kun, ruled for a time by bloodshed. But ere long this uprising, which had very little popular support, was put down; reaction set in, and a dictatorial government was established after it had compiled its own catalogue of excesses. Here was made manifest, probably for the first time, how significant the stability of religious groups could prove to be. Not only did they temper noticeably the excesses of extremists, but under the leadership of great churchmen they began to build organizations dedicated to social improvement. It is also true that bitter experience under the Béla Kun regime made Hungary one of the most anti-Communist countries of Europe.

And so, as the turbulence engendered by the war apparently subsided, it seemed probable that a period of relative security

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795 and peace would ensue. In so far as Catholics were concerned, tactful Papal diplomacy insured the continuance of the work of the Church, under altered conditions. But the position of all religions in Eastern Europe was considerably improved. New currents of thought and new forms of group action strengthened Protestantism. Anticlericalism gave way in many quarters to [793] a desire for cordial relationships with the churches. To a very considerable extent Eastern Europe profited by the extraordinary effectiveness and freshness of Christian theological and philosophical writing in France and Germany. But the strongest impetus came from the younger clergy, many of them veterans, who devised and directed new agencies to cope with social problems. It could no longer be said that Catholics, for example, were all bedfellows of special privilege. Confidence was nearly everywhere greater than it had been for generations. It is scarcely extravagant to say that if Hitler had not arisen to inflict doom and agony on countless millions, the great effort of Christian reconstruction in Eastern Europe might have succeeded.

798 The strangely magnetic and mentally diseased Austrian artist who became the dictator of Germany was the spokesman for a derouted, unhappy, and unsettled following. As his power was extended over Eastern Europe the Christian churches suffered only less horribly than Judaism. Priests were shot, sent to concentration camps, exiled from their parishes. Religious communities were suppressed, and their property and their schools were removed from under the jurisdiction of the Church; journals of religious opinion were silenced. The long catalogue of acts of oppression contains almost every kind of persecution save those spectacular mass executions by which the Jewish people were decimated. But at least it was made apparent that there was only one kind of opposition which the Nazis needed to fear—the refusal of faithful Christians, both

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823 of the State, to an extent undreamed of in Czarist Russia. We were wont, many of us, to make uncomplimentary references to the clergy of the old regime. Some of the strictures were too sweeping. But, alas, what we must be prepared to say about the Russian Church under the Soviets is far more devastating. It has become an institution which all but blesses the concentration camp system, and escorts slave labor to its doom with
E a kind of liturgical brass band.

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648 The Soviet objective is to reduce religious organizations outside Russia to the status of the Orthodox Church at home. The
798 formula is always and everywhere the same, though it may be applied with greater or lesser rigor. Therefore inevitably the Vatican becomes the great antagonist, to be fought with every means. The Holy See, pledged to the profession of the Christian Gospels without dilution of the ethical obligations which they impose upon everyone who accepts them in the Catholic sense, cannot agree that the Church is to be an instrument of the State —even, indeed, a benign and merciful instrument. The Vatican is therefore the ignoble Fascist Beast of the Bolshevik Apocalypse. Upon the heads of persons who remain loyal to the ancient See of Catholic Christendom, blows have rained in constant succession. This is the direst persecution the Church has
E suffered since the days of the Caesars.

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795 Because most of what may be reported concerns the Catholic
779 Church, a brief review of its history and endeavors in Eastern Europe will help to bring events into perspective. The cleavage of the Roman Empire, establishing the rivalry between the emperors of Rome and Byzantium, begot two Churches also, each claiming for itself the charisma of Apostolic Christianity. With the passing of time, profound differences of a dogmatic, moral, and canonical kind developed. The organizational character of religion was also modified radically, so that, while in the East the ties binding the religious nations to the historic pa-

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triarchal See of Constantinople were either broken completely or allowed to become loose and tenuous, in the West the structure of the Roman Catholic Church became more monolithic in fact, if not in theory. No doubt this divergence was rooted partly in theology, but one cause was the decline of Constantinople as an important Christian center and its subjection to Turkish rule.

Yet there could never be any doubt that both Churches were intensely and ardently Catholic. They kept the tradition of the priesthood as a sacramental ordination administered by bishops whose authority had been handed down in direct line of succession from the Apostles. Both retained the Mass as that in which the Sacrifice of Christ was reenacted so that His body and blood might be with the Church always. Devotion to the Virgin Mary, so long a thorn in the flesh of Western Protestantism, was a common heritage and treasure, however different the conceptions of Mary's personality and presence or the liturgies in which her praise was spelled out in prayer. Therefore efforts to effect reunion have never flagged since the Middle Ages. The fact that they have failed may well be, as many writers have thought, one of the great tragedies of history.

For every thoughtful Western Catholic the virtues and attitudes cherished in the East are precious because they reflect mystical prayer and thought and often the vital, profound humility of the human sinner who does not lose himself in "personalism": the personalism which in the West has so often favored the delusion that the rights and righteousness of man are pearls grown within himself through the practice of religion or morality, independent of the sacred order which is in God and which, when he is sometimes devout and submissive, he may possess in the deepest core of his being. On the other hand the West, unlike the East, has an illustrious tradition of endeavor to permeate the speculative and practical intelligence by holi-

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ness, so that the other human being, the brother, with his needs, fears, and failings as well as his innate good qualities, may be brought into a community of charity and justice. The great Saints of Roman Catholicism are not seldom found among men who, like Francis, Dominic, Benedict, and Ignatius, were builders of communities that sought the fullest possible human expression of man's sense of union with God and with his fellows upon the earth.

Yet it is over the question of authority that the contest between East and West has been most keen. In Western eyes the great failure of the Orthodox Church has been its inability to disassociate itself from the control of the secular state. We see, for example, in Communist Russia today as well as we seem to see in czarist history, a religion which does what it is told to do, which lulls the consciences of men into obedience to tyranny. But if I understand such writers as Berdyaev correctly, freedom to find Christ in the Church is all that matters to the Russian Christian, and any authoritatively formulated faith is in his eyes a serious denial of a cardinal rule by which the soul must live. This philosophical restatement of the remarks concerning the Grand Inquisitor which are familiar to readers of Dostoievski's *Brothers Karamazov* is, of course, a valid critique of those moments in the history of Western Catholicism when force was used to insure men's allegiance to the Church; but it does not deal at all with the central and abiding doctrines of Western Catholicism on authority. The Papacy is not, in the view of those who recognize it, an institution with the purpose of driving people into the Church and holding them there, but is rather the sublime instrumentality through which Divine Grace wards off from the Catholic communion all that, whatever its source, was not present from the beginning in Christ's teaching, literally or implicitly. For this reason Western Catholics have loved it, died for it, borne persecution for its sake.

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and reverenced those who, however worthily or unworthily, represented it to the world. The Western Catholic is as free as anyone else to come to his insight into the fullness of the meaning of Christianity but he has a certainty held with profound gratitude that when he is in his Church he will not unwittingly find strange gods upon the altars.

In any event, the quest for reunion continued and reached, as has been indicated, an initial nadir during the period of the Crusades and a moment of optimistic hopefulness at the Councils of Ferrara and Florence during the fifteenth century. Only a brief reference to either is possible here. The Crusaders, who were roused by eloquent preachers like St. Bernard to take up arms and make the long journey eastward to wrest the Holy Places associated with the life and death of Our Lord from the Turks, served a consecrated cause; but many of them were very human, indeed. Some historians conclude from the sermons of St. Bernard and other preachers of the time that the purely mundane benefits which accrued to the men who took up the Cross were so great that many ruffians (contrary to romantic historians, the Middle Ages had their share of them) embarked on the adventure. It is also evident that although the Crusades owed their origin to an appeal for help from the Byzantine Emperor, to which the monks of Cluny responded as best they could, the net cultural result was that the East was not only disappointed in what the West could achieve but disgusted with the conduct of the armies, even as since that time many another occupied country has been with foreign soldiers who have been billeted on its soil. On the other hand, the West heard many a report about the corruption and venality of the East, even as the home people in this our day have listened to shocking stories of lands which their soldier sons have seen. It must be added that the subsequent continued dominion of the Turks likewise dampened the ardor of friendship.

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175 The great Councils to which we have referred opened in a
● 795 spirit of optimism, despite the nationalistic bickering to which
648 Europe was then subject. The Greeks were in a conciliatory mood, due largely to their need of Western allies against the followers of Mohammed, but they arrived in Europe at a time of bitter conflict over whether a Council took precedence over the Pope. The Decree of Union did not satisfy the great mass of the Greeks, even though the overwhelming majority of their ecclesiastical representatives assented to it in accordance with the wishes of the Emperor. The only positive result was the formation of the Greek Churches in union with Rome, usually called the Uniate Churches. In Russia, as we have seen, the Czar vetoed any plan of reunion.

But the great dream of reunion did not die, and after World War I it was revived especially by Pope Pius XI, who had intimate personal knowledge of conditions in Eastern Europe from the high vantage point of the Holy See. Institutions under the auspices of the Papacy were established to promote the achievement of One Fold and One Shepherd. At the same time the Protestant Ecumenical Council likewise began to search for ways in which to draw the Eastern Churches into union, with the Churches bound together under its roof. These efforts were not wholly useless, but it was again obvious that the disunity of the Christian West had puzzled and confused rather than attracted the East.

175 Meanwhile great changes had taken place. The Papacy was
823 compelled to reckon with the rise of secularism, which swept
795 across Eastern Europe from the West during the nineteenth century. Medieval ecclesiastical institutions were widely identified with feudalism; and in addition new intellectual and scientific movements gave rise to a widespread conviction that religion was in itself a barrier to the development of the good, or at least the prosperous, society. The attack on feudalism

[1. Councils of Ferrara and Florence, 15th cent. - Analyst.]

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which became the great French Revolution of 1789 was also a rebellion against the privileged Church; and after the rise of a capitalistic society the estrangement of the poor from religion became the dominant fact in the cultural history of Western Europe. Hegelian philosophy—combining a doctrine of the constantly mobile and shifting Mind with a theory of the State as the sole primordially ordained center of permanence in an otherwise impermanent world—came to prominence at a time when dissatisfaction with Liberalism (in the continental sense) was breeding myths of political utopianism among the masses. Of these myths the strongest, temporarily at least, was the Marxist faith, rooted in a class-conscious usurpation of Hegelian thought. Yet observers who looked deeply into the wellsprings from which the intellectual behavior of the time was fed could see that a creed drastically counter to Marxism was arising in many different places, almost spontaneously. This might be termed dynamic traditionalism—that is, investing the past of man with sacredness and subsequently selecting from it forces and figures that could be made objects of the cult, in which the concept of human sacrality might receive a quasi-liturgical form. Perhaps such a force might be race, or classical antiquity, or one of the urges which some historians read into the Renaissance. To the exponents of dynamic traditionalism, the Catholic Church often seemed to be one great force among many others. For did it not have discipline, as Charles Maurras observed, and a heritage of beauty ranging all the way from the austerity of Cluny to the gorgeous splendor of St. Peter's?

This traditionalism tempted many Catholics—was indeed a far greater peril to orthodoxy than even the antecedent, all-pervading Liberalism. That no doubt had led not a few to believe that the Christian creed was outmoded and so could be made serviceable only by adapting it, more or less subtly, to the assumptions of modern scientific and philosophical

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thought; but dynamic traditionalism transformed the Church of the Master into a genteel and eminently historical institution, with the role of conferring the august dignity of an assumed other world upon the power politics of the here-and-now. The robes of prelates fitted very well into the pageantry of the State, and so there were not a few who thought that a benediction might well be expended upon Nazis and Fascists, to the accompaniment of incense and carefully selected items of Gregorian chant, if only their grandiose parades would include a section devoted exclusively to the clergy. It may be said parenthetically that today no one knows whether the Russia of Stalin was a devotee of Marxism or of dynamic traditionalism. Had Stalin donned the robes of Ivan, who could have told which heresy he was espousing?

A succession of great Popes, possibly the most remarkable in the long annals of the Church, accepted the challenge. Leo XIII, intellectual and aristocratic, recognized the necessity for demonstrating to the workers that they were not at present inside the realms of a Christian civilization that doomed them to a condition of perennial peonage. His successor, Pope Pius X, left to the world the conviction that the Church is the servant of peace; and Benedict XV committed all Catholics to the support of an international order. In 1922 began the vigorous pontificate of Pius XI, distinguished for the world-wide scope of his interests and sympathies. Whereas during several centuries the See of Rome had worn an air of Roman provincialism, the tireless leadership of this learned, mountain-climbing North Italian imparted to it a new tinge of contemporaneousness and cosmopolitanism. The Vatican ended its old quarrel with the Italian State over the Papal territories, even though at some risk of seeming to assent to the dictatorship of Mussolini. It acquired a radio station, an Americanized library system, and even a scientific academy. Through adroit and conciliа-

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tory diplomatic activity agreements were reached with the new states of Europe as well as with many countries overseas concerning relationships between Church and State. In ways which were often startlingly new, the laity was associated with the clergy in the work of the Church; and social reform was advocated, in the spirit of a great Encyclical letter restating and re-forming the principles of the moral teaching concerning society which are implicit in the Catholic tradition. All these things were then kept alive under the next Pope, Pius XII.

It is part of the universal tragedy of our time that so very much of what seemed so promising should have been engulfed by the fearful upheavals which, originating in Europe, for a time threatened to shatter the foundations of human society everywhere. In Adolf Hitler appeared the demagogic voluntarist who gave the heresy of dynamic traditionalism its most drastic and frightening formulation. Meanwhile, in nearly every other country Marxism became the gospel of the dissident intellectuals, who often were able to commit to their view sections of the working population, indeed not infrequently unwilling sections. Yet Pius XI had felt, almost from the moment he assumed Pontificate, that a great and shattering storm was brewing in Europe. That is why he labored so vigorously for the development of the Church in other parts of the world, including Africa and Asia. He took steps to forestall the disaster, opposing the mighty heresies whenever he could even though sometimes the infection had spread so far among Catholics themselves that—as in the case of the *Action française*—Princes of the Church did not concur with him.

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In Eastern Europe the position of the Church was inevitably and critically affected by inability to arrive at a *modus vivendi* with the Bolshevik government. The lengthy story of efforts to reach an agreement cannot be told here; but it may be recalled that until the summer of 1924 a Papal Relief Mission was ac-

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797 tive in Russia at the request of the government, bringing food,
659 clothing, and medicine to many tens of thousands. Yet even while this work of charity was in progress, priests and prelates
798 were sentenced to death and executed, churches were looted
648 and closed, and many of the faithful were exiled. The Bolsheviks insisted that, until the Vatican recognized the regime as a lawfully constituted government, clergymen professing allegiance to Rome must be regarded as enemies; Russian émigré circles were just as vehement in demanding that no such recognition be accorded; and circles representative of the Orthodox Church opposed even the Papal Relief Mission, on the ground that its directors were in reality proselytizers. In the circumstances, the Vatican tried to carry on its relief work as long as possible, and to use whatever influence it could muster to save the persecuted bishops and priests. In the end, however, the isolated remnants of Roman Catholicism in Russia lost even
E the remotest hope that Rome could do anything for them.

659 The countries west of Russia, most of them newly estab-
186 lished, presented less formidable obstacles to the mission of
795 the Church; but in not a few of them conditions were turbulent enough. In Czechoslovakia, for example, insurgent nationalism combined with anticlericalism to create within the Catholic clergy a sizable group who not only wished to rid the Church of every vestige of association with the Habsburgs but also strove to "reform" the ecclesiastical organization itself and to do away with such constraints as celibacy. However, the secession and subsequent excommunication of this group led to a great strengthening of the loyal majority. Catholics were collectively more resolute, and by 1925 the fever had abated, and relations between Church and State were established on a solid foundation. Elsewhere the story was similar, though perhaps less stormy and tawdry.

000 In attempting to visualize the complex continuous effort by

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In attempting to visualize the complex continuous effort by
the Church in these lands to educate the people and to meet their 794
physical and spiritual needs we deal not with an island in the stream of modern life—as we should if, for example, we set out to evaluate the influence of religion on the art, music, and architecture of present-day America—but verily with that stream itself. For example, the press that appeared under Catholic auspices in Poland, Hungary, and Czechoslovakia was a mighty force, in all its ramifications from the daily newspaper to the monthly periodical, for the shaping of public opinion. On the other hand, hospitals and refuges, schools and day nurseries, conducted for the most part under the supervision of religious orders, were almost the only institutions of such character to be found in some countries. Therefore the Communist [798]
onslaught upon this manifold activity was not merely against tradition but verily against action. It could not have succeeded unless its directors were safely established behind a dense array of Russian machine guns. It was an invasion resembling in some respects the earlier inroads from the East under which all these lands had suffered not once but many times. Assuredly the men in the Vatican, pondering the news each day, must often have let their thought return to times when Turk and Tartar bombarded the ancient citadels of once Christian Europe.

We shall now summarize, though of necessity far too briefly, 795
Protestant efforts to establish ecumenical union with the Rus- 659
sian Orthodox Church. On the one hand they resulted to some extent from the failure during the Pontificate of Pope Leo XIII to prepare the way for the union of the Anglican Church with Rome. This failure, it will be recalled, was in large measure due to Rome's decision that Anglican Orders were not valid. On the other hand, Protestant Churches in Eastern Europe often felt that the attitude of Russian Orthodoxy toward the State was more compatible with the traditional views of

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795 Protestantism than were those of Roman Catholicism. Luther-
659 ans, for example, were not averse to identifying their Church with a political power; but their belief that the Kingdom of God and the kingdoms of this world are radically different also led to the conclusion that the Church could accept responsibility for approving or opposing actions by the State only when these controverted directly the moral and religious truths which had been made explicit in the teachings of the Lord Jesus. Thus a section of the German Lutheran Church opposed Nazism with sublime courage because Hitler had repudiated in principle such central teachings as that of the validity of Christian baptism when administered to persons of Jewish origin.

795 But Protestants viewed with uneasiness the Catholic practice
668 of creating organizations of the faithful for political and social action—which led in Germany to the creation of the Center Party on the basis of organizational efforts that had their origin in 1840. This was by no means merely an opportunistic reaction, even though upon occasion ecclesiastical rivalry may have played a part. While some loyal Protestants cooperated with and even voted for the Center Party, even as did a number of Jews, the great majority felt—no doubt, upon occasion, quite properly—that partisan activity brought the Church into realms where religious teaching was compromised for the sake of political expediency. This cleavage was intensified after Karl Barth and his associates formulated a neo-orthodox theology whose profound influence extended beyond Germany to Calvinism and Lutheranism in the whole of Eastern Europe. How strongly this criticism affected Catholic practice cannot be discussed here; but it may be pointed out that, during much of the Pontificate of Pius XI, Rome contemplated withdrawing the faithful completely from organizations of a political and social character, and building up instead the groups which received the generic name Catholic Action. Only toward the close of his

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Pontificate did Pius XI reaffirm the desirability of the more secular associations. And in Germany after World War II Catholics elected to create an interconfessional party, the Christian Democratic Union, instead of resurrecting the old Center Party (which emerged as a small minority movement only).

In any event, wide circles of the clergy and the laity looked upon the Russian Church with deep if sometimes nostalgic respect, particularly when the yearning for the reunion of Christendom was spiritually motivated and sincere. Despite many efforts, the outlook for an eventual peace with the Roman See which would obliterate the divisive past seemed to be unpromising. And on the other hand the "Social Christianity" to which American Protestantism appeared to be irretrievably committed impressed the more traditional European theologians as being thin and relatively mundane. There remained the hope that by forging a bond with the Orthodox East a new Christian community, transcending national boundaries, could be established. The writings of Russian exiles were read with avidity; and the authors were of such talent, insight, and sometimes genius that they exerted a great influence. There can be no doubt that, if after victory in 1945 Stalin had adopted a conciliatory policy and had conceded genuine religious and social freedom, Central and Eastern Europe would have become strongly, even ardently pro-Russian. The response in Protestant communities would have been particularly sincere.

The hope for such a policy was at times as fervent as a messianic dream, and it died hard. Pastor Martin Niemoeller has perhaps been its most eloquent exponent, but there have been many others. It is not possible to understand fully the situation that developed unless one bears these things in mind. Only with great difficulty could Europe resign itself to accepting the intellectual and cultural leadership of the United States. This sobering thought may also be a healing one.